

Executive Director

Dean M. Sparks, MSW, LISW

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Lila Shousher

*Term ended during 2012

Our Mission

To lead the community in the protection of children at risk of abuse and neglect. This is accomplished by working with families, service providers and community members to assess risk and coordinate community-based services resulting in safe, stable and permanent families for children.



**Lucas County
Children Services**

Lucas County Plaza • 705 Adams St. • Toledo, OH 43604
Phone: (419) 213-3200 • Fax: (419) 327-3291

Switchboard: **419.213.3200**

To report child abuse/neglect: **419.213.CARE**

Foster care/adoptions: **419.213.3336**

Fax: 419.327.3291



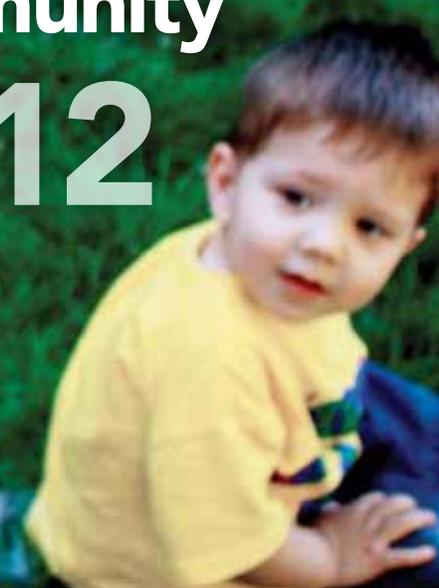
www.lucaskids.net



**Lucas County
Children Services**

**Report to the
Community**

2012





Protecting Children, Promoting Families

Lucas County Children Services (LCCS) investigates allegations of child abuse and neglect, and offers protective and other support services to children and their families. We work closely with families to

help them address the factors contributing to abuse or neglect and help them care for their children. Our partnerships with other community organizations provide critical support in areas such as substance abuse treatment, managing stress, health care and housing.

We rely on members of the community to report suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect. Those who regularly work with children are required by law to do so. Fifty-eight percent of all referrals come from these “mandated reporters,” with the balance coming from private or anonymous sources.



Increasing Need for Services

LCCS faced many challenges in 2012. As the agency was finding ways to reduce expenditures in light of a five percent decline in revenues, it faced a 20 percent increase in child abuse/neglect referrals compared to 2011. These reports involved 22 percent more alleged child victims than we saw during the previous year. Casework staff point to a rising incidence of prescription drug and opiate abuse among families and ongoing economic pressures in the community as potential causes for this dramatic increase in service demand.

Children Belong in Families

LCCS believes that children belong with their families. Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of the children we helped in 2012 received services while in the care of their parents or a relative. Most of the others lived in foster or adoptive homes, with just four percent living in group homes, residential treatment or other situations.

When problems in the home are too severe for children to be reunited with their parents, we develop permanent plans for them. These plans may include living with a relative, adoption, or a long-term foster placement until the child reaches adulthood. In 2012, this agency finalized the adoptions of 108 children.

Our Staff

LCCS responded to declining revenues by continuing to reduce its workforce through attrition. Over the past three years, 30 (mostly management-level) jobs have remained vacant. In 2012, the agency staff included 214 caseworkers, with 155 employees providing a variety of support and administrative services. LCCS relies on its experienced caseworkers; each has at least a bachelor's degree in a human services-related field. All caseworkers take 90 hours of training during their first year of service, as well as a minimum of 36 additional hours of training annually.

2012 AT A GLANCE

Children Served – 12,435
 Families Served – 5,314
 New Cases Opened - 455
 Average Number of Children on Caseload - 1,151
 Adoptions Finalized - 108

*In Differential Response cases, no perpetrator or victim is identified. Differential Response accounted for 71% of cases in 2012.



Continuous Quality Improvement

In the most recent analysis of LCCS' performance on the federal Child and Family Service Review indicators, the agency remained in compliance with ten of 17 measures. This is consistent with past performance, and far exceeds Ohio's statewide compliance rate of five out of the 17 measures.

In 2012, LCCS sought, and achieved, reaccreditation from the Council on Accreditation (COA) for the period of February 2013 through February 2017. LCCS' achievement is particularly notable in that COA expedited its reaccreditation after finding the agency to be in compliance with all fundamental practice standards following a site review in October.

Special Initiatives and Programs

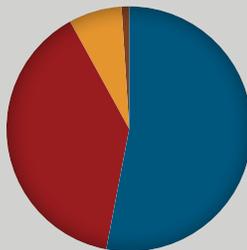
In addition to fulfilling its core mission of protecting children and promoting families, in 2012, LCCS supported several special initiatives.

- **Enhancing Parent/Child Visitation** – LCCS hired two visit coaches to work with parents during their visits to improve parent/child interaction. The agency also initiated a pilot project designed to improve reunification outcomes.
- **Crossover Youth Project with Juvenile Court** – To meet the unique needs of adolescents involved with both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, LCCS began a pilot project with the Juvenile Court to improve services and outcomes for these youth.
- **Working with Human Trafficking Victims** – Ohio House Bill 262, passed in June 2012, assigns child welfare agencies the primary responsibility of servicing child trafficking victims. The agency provided specialized training for caseworkers and began developing protocols for handling child trafficking cases.
- **Safe and Together Training** – LCCS caseworkers participated in this training to help them keep children safe with their non-offending parent and intervening with the perpetrator to reduce risk and harm to the children.
- **Parent Partnership Program (P3)** – This program grew significantly in 2012, adding more parents and expanding their volunteer activities to assist families currently involved in the child welfare system.
- **Kinship Orientation** – LCCS provided training to 72 kinship providers, helping them understand their rights, roles and responsibilities as caregivers, and making them aware of the many resources available in the community.
- **Fatherhood Initiative** – LCCS continued to provide opportunities for father engagement using a “father-friendly” approach.

Revenue and Expenses

Agency revenues for 2012 were \$36,131,895, down five percent from 2011. The agency also reduced spending by four percent in 2012 compared to 2011; expenses for 2012 were \$41,555,670. The agency used \$5,423,775 of agency reserves to balance the budget, leaving LCCS with a fund balance of \$8,350,753 at the end of the year.

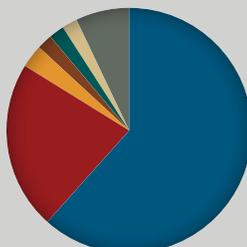
The two Children Services property tax levies (1.0 mill and 1.4 mills) remain the agency's largest (53 percent) source of funds. The 1.0 mill levy expires in 2013, and the 1.4 mill levy expires in 2016. In order to ensure uninterrupted levy revenues, LCCS asked voters in November 2012 to renew the 1.0 mill levy and increase it by .85 mills. Voters approved the measure, and the agency will begin to collect that revenue in 2014.



2012 Revenue

Levy	\$18,978,410	53%
Federal	\$14,091,166	39%
State	\$2,545,011	7%
Other	\$517,308	1%

TOTAL \$36,131,895



2012 Expenses

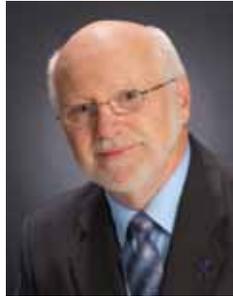
Salaries & Benefits	\$25,290,407	61%
Placement Costs	\$9,294,619	22%
Child Welfare Contracts	\$1,248,950	3%
Day Care	\$948,661	2%
Other Client Costs	\$997,540	2%
Other Contracts	\$730,593	2%
Other Operating Costs	\$3,044,900	7%

TOTAL \$41,555,670

Call **419-213-CARE** (2273),
24 hours, 7 days a week.

Dear Lucas County Citizen:

Sadly, after going a year without a child abuse-related fatality in Lucas County, this community lost ten children to abuse, neglect and violence in 2012. Three siblings died as a result of a murder/suicide; an infant died as the result of a gang-related shooting; another child died in a fire attributed to the child playing with matches; and five other children died as a result of physical trauma. LCCS had little or no involvement with any of these families or children prior to their deaths, but we mourn them, nonetheless.



Dean M. Sparks

The year also saw dramatic increases — more than 20 percent — in child abuse/neglect referrals, the number of alleged child victims, and the number of children entering custody. These increases follow a decrease of eight percent in referrals and child victims in 2011. While some of this year's increases can be attributed to stress brought on by the community's weak economy, we also suspect that cutbacks in other community social service programs can be linked to these trends.

On a positive note, in November 2012, LCCS asked voters to look toward the future and approve a 1.85 mill levy renewal and increase, to be collected starting in 2014. Voters approved the measure by a 55 percent to 45 percent margin. While the agency's finances will remain tight for 2013, the additional millage will provide some relief for 2014 and beyond.

By carefully scrutinizing our expenditures and leaving selected staff vacancies unfilled, LCCS has been able to maintain our service levels and establish innovative new programs, such as providing visit coaches for our Family Visits Department, and addressing the child protection needs of trafficked youth. We also put greater emphasis on our parent mentoring program.

Finally, we were pleased to learn late in 2012 that the agency sailed through reaccreditation by the Council on Accreditation. COA expedited the process after a site visit in October where they found LCCS to be in compliance with all fundamental practice areas. This reaccreditation covers the period of February 2013 through February 2017. We can all be proud of the fact that this agency meets or exceeds child welfare best practice standards, and we will continue to be a leader in this field.

We appreciate the ongoing support of our county commissioners, other county agencies and community service providers.

Sincerely,

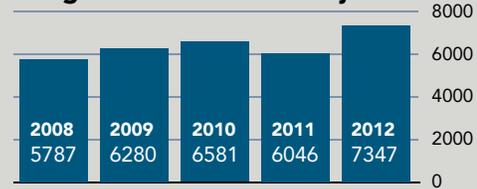

Dean M. Sparks
Executive Director



Investigations by Year



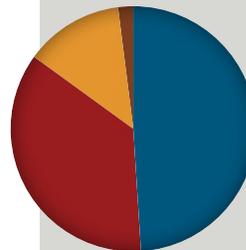
Alleged Child Victims/Subjects



Substantiated Victims

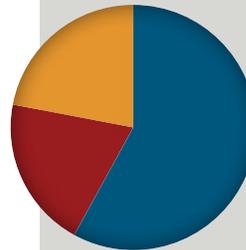


*LCCS began adopting the Differential Response protocol in late 2010 and fully implemented it in 2011. Abuse is not substantiated in Differential Response cases.



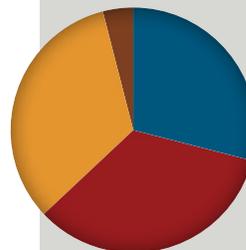
Investigations by Type of Abuse

- Physical abuse 49%
- Neglect 36%
- Sexual abuse 13%
- Emotional abuse 2%



Age of Children in Custody

- 0 - 5 years 58%
- 6 - 12 years 20%
- 13 - 18 years 22%



Placement Settings for Children in Services

- 29% - 332 live in their own homes
- 34% - 386 live with a relative or kinship provider
- 33% - 389 live in foster care or similar placement
- 4% - 44 children live in non-family settings; 32 live in group homes or private institutions